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ABSTRACT

A discussion of second language instruction looks briefly at some shortcomings of traditional method-based approaches and examines what are predicted to be major influences on language teaching in the 1990s. Objections to method-based instruction include the inadequacy of the term "method," its prescriptive approach, lack of distinction between methods in classroom practice, and the fact that it is only one part of instructional design. A broader model of instructional design is proposed, based on four areas of consideration: (1) knowledge considerations, or the content and learner outcomes; (2) instructional consideration, or factors that affect design and delivery of instruction, including methods, media, and materials used; (3) learner considerations, including age, proficiency level, and developmental stage; and (4) administrative considerations, such as authority, policy, and commitment. Factors identified as likely to shape language instruction in the 1990s include: continuing inquiry into the nature of language and linguistic content of instruction; acknowledgment of the commonalities of many current methods; continued interest in teaching and learning styles; a larger role for technology; recognition of the role of cultural variables in learning success; concern for social organization in learning tasks; sociolinguistic research findings; new knowledge of cognition and motivation; and reexamination of authority structures. (MSE)

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AFTER METHODS, WHAT?

THEODORE S. RODGERS

ED 366 182

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AFTER METHODS, WHAT?

Theodore S Rodgers

INTRODUCTION

A couple of years ago Jack Richards and I did a book for Cambridge University Press in which we analyzed and mildly critiqued eight of the best-known methods for teaching second languages. We used for the purposes of description, analysis and critique a model which we called Approach, Design and Procedure. Within the categories subsumed under Design we considered Teacher Roles and Learner Roles - that is, we summarized for each method what was expected of a teacher or a learner operating according to the prescriptions of that method.

Two things we did not do in the book. One was to attempt to generalize across methods those features which seemed to be most central to reported method success. Second, we did not define how a learner or teacher might use the analysis in an attempt to identify those methods or sub-method strategies which might prove most appropriate or successful in individual learning and teaching situations. One of the goals of this paper is to extend the commentary to encompass these issues.

Let me first say, however, that I am not going to talk about methods. The 1980's was the decade of Methods, the 1990's will not be. One of the outcomes of method studies like our own was a realization of the many shortcomings of traditional methodological approaches to language learning and teaching. Before proceeding to discuss what I do think the major influences in language teaching in the 1990's will be, it will be useful to highlight some of the shortcomings of method-based approaches to language education.

I MADNESS IN OUR METHODS

There have been several kinds of objections to method-based approaches to language teaching. Some of the objections have been definitional. What is Methodology? What does it mean - a Method? One confusion here was of our own doing and was created intentionally. The story goes as follows. The Richards and Rodgers methods' analysis model is summarized in the title of the journal article from which our book ultimately grew. The article is called,

"Method: Approach, Design, and Procedure" (Richards and Rodgers, 1982). In this article we took as our point of departure an older instructional model of Ed Anthony's. Anthony's model was summarized in his article title which is called, "Approach, Method and Technique" (Anthony, 1963). We liked Method as the umbrella term for our model and found it convenient - convenient for us if nobody else - to modify Anthony's terminology according to our own predispositions. Anthony's Method became our Design. So Anthony, and Richards and Rodgers both use the term Method but with quite different scope and intention.

When we got around to doing the book, the publisher urged us to do a chapter on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as one of the methods analyzed in the book. However, most of the major spokespersons for CLT were unhappy in our referring to CLT as a Method. They saw CLT as an Approach rather than as a Method. Unfortunately, we had already chosen to use Approach in a different sense in the book. We decided to finesse the issue by including CLT in our analysis and using as a book title *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. We also retained Approach in the model designation "Method: Approach, Design and Procedure". So we used Approach in the title and Approach in the model in quite dramatically different senses. We felt it might confuse the reader to highlight this, so we decided not to mention it at all.

The issue can be belabored, if it has not been belabored already. The point is that Method and Methodology and related terms like Approach are used in several different, often incompatible, senses by those who write and talk about Methods.

A second objection raised in discussions of method-based instructional planning is that the methodology assumes a "top-down" approach to learning and teaching. That is, learning is held to derive from applying and putting into practice a particular model (Method) of language teaching. Hence, common to methods is a set of prescriptions as to what teachers and learners should do in the classroom. The teacher's job is to make his or her teaching style as well as the learner's learning style match the method. Thus, methodology is held to deny teacher effectiveness and learner uniqueness except as circumscribed by the method of application. (Richards, 1986).

A third objection to focus on methodology in language teaching is that competing methods are often indistinguishable in their classroom practices. In its strongest form, this objection holds that methods and classroom practices are only coincidentally related. Swaffar et al (1982) noted that "One consistent problem is whether or not teachers involved in presenting materials created for a particular method are actually reflecting the underlying philosophies of these methods in their classroom practices." Swaffar et al found that many of the distinctions used to contrast methods, particularly those based on classroom activities, did not exist in actual practice.

A final objection, and the one I am using as motivation for this paper, is

that methodology, with or without the delights and despairs cataloged above, is only one part of language teaching design and, perhaps, not the most important part. To support this claim, I want to introduce a model of instructional design which subsumes methodology and which I think more accurately represents how educational programs in general and language education programs in particular can and should be described and crafted.

Just before hopping into our latest Model T, I would like to alert you to a theme which will run, ramble and roam throughout the remainder of this paper.

II THE GANG OF FOURS

Numerology has always had a heavy impact on didactic parlance. "One" had its day... "One for all and all for one"... "The one Golden Rule"... "Two" has had its day as well. Dichotomies abound. Active/Passive, Product/Process, Behavioral/Cognitive, left brain/right brain... yin and yang... East and West... The Bad and the Beautiful...

In its time, "Three" has also had priority in the popular search for quantitative quintessence. The Three R's, the Three tenses, the Three persons have had their grip on language education, the fingermarks of which are still seen in many parts of the world. In rich evidence are The Three classes of intellect. Buddha's Three Signs of Being. Three Coins in a Fountain... wise men... Faces of Eve... o'clock in the morning...

But times change and new magic numbers emerge.

The emergent figure of fact and fantasy, fad and fallacy is, as you may have guessed, Four. Everything that's in for the late eighties and early nineties will come packaged in fours. In fact, probably the best indicator of intellectual rigor and worth of any educational proposal for the nineties is a positive answer to the question, "Is it packaged in units of Four?" I hope to demonstrate this fully in the following. However, to give you a feeling for the magic of Four in its full flush, this fourflusher has composed a brief song as prelude and mnemonic for that which, with your fourbearance and fourgiveness, will soon be presented more fourmally. Song: (To the tune of "I'm Looking Over a Four-leaf Clover").

I hope to bottle, my four part model,
That nobody's seen before.
One part's for **Teachers**, the second for **Lore**,
The third is for **Learners**, we hope more and more.
No need explaining the one remaining,
It's the **Principal** at your door.

Oh, I hope to bottle my four part model,
So please leave your notes at the door.
So **please** leave your notes at the door.

III DA KILA FROM MANILA

The first foursome off the model tee, and the one that will set the pattern for those to follow, I have called the KILA model of educational design. KILA is the acronym for the four considerations which in concert shape any educational program. **K** stands for Knowledge Considerations, **I** for Instructional Considerations, **L** for Learner Considerations and **A** for Administrative Considerations. Thus, **"K", "I", "L", "A" = "KILA"**. Why "KILA from Manila?" I think I mentioned a model like the first in Manila in the famous "Flutter like a Butterfly, Beep like a Bee" meeting with Mohammad Ali. Why DA KILA? "Dakila" in Tagalog has a meaning something like "premium, the finest." I felt such association with the model had to be helpful.

1. "K", KNOWLEDGE CONSIDERATIONS ("Lore" in my song)

Knowledge considerations involve both the input and output forms of instructional content. They include the derivation and organisation of content (input) as well as the anticipated learner outcomes--whether these are skills, capacities, changed behaviours, or appreciations. In language education, Knowledge Considerations involve the assumptions about what language is - a set of habits, sentences, rules, pre-dispositions or whatever. It also includes the content - the substantive range - of the instructional language examples or texts be these Arithmetic, Social Studies, Chemical Engineering, Waiter Talk, or English for Baggage Handlers. Knowledge considerations involve responses to questions such as:

* Is knowledge content held to be "liberal", "humanistic", "technical" or whatever?
* What knowledge base informs the educator as to the selection and organisation of content?
* Is there a 'structure' of knowledge assumed and is this structure to be reflected in the educational design?

2. "I", INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS ("Teachers" in my song)

Instructional considerations reflect the factors which impact on the design and delivery of instruction and reflect the input not only of teachers, but of paraprofessionals, resource people, content specialists and other staff involved in the program. They involve most conspicuously, from the point of view of this paper, instructional methods. Instructional Considerations also include programs and materials, technologies, educational environments, time and scheduling techniques and plans for reporting on learning progress to learners, teachers, sponsors, administrators and other interested parties. Instructional considerations involve responses to such questions as:

* Is there an instructional program or programs which learners and teachers are expected to follow?
* What media are used for instructional delivery?
* How do teachers view their role in the instructional process?

3. "L", LEARNER CONSIDERATIONS ("Learners" in my song)

Learner considerations involve the ages, proficiency levels, and developmental stages of the learner or learners. They include as well social background characteristics, world views and learning expectations. Considerations include learners' self-perceptions and prior learning experiences as well as preferred learning styles, strategies, environments, and groupings. If group or class learning is contemplated, characteristics of the group size, homogeneity, history, collective aspirations are of concern. Learner considerations involve responses to such questions as:

* How are intended leaners characterised--by themselves and others?
* Who determines learning goals for learners and how are these goals communicated to learners?
* Can learning styles and strategies be determined? Is there any intention to do so and is there any consequence of such determination?

4. "A", ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS ("Principals" in my song)

In studies of programmatic educational change, three administrative influences are typically identified--those from the central office, those from the 'program', and those from the schools. Administrative considerations at all levels will determine the scale, pace and style of educational delivery. Adminis-

trative agents are involved in the establishment, interpretation and implementation of policy. This includes promulgation of policy plans to public and political as well as to educational representatives. Plans for and execution of teacher and learner selection and promotion, environmental development and institutional image are also administrative considerations. Administrative considerations include answers to such questions as:

* Are the critical administrative groups clearly identified?
* How is policy made and how is it implemented?
* What sort of commitment do administrative agents have to in-place and proposed programs? Is commitment likely to be long term or short term?

In an ideal design situation, these four areas of consideration are coordinated and in balance. In the non-ideal or typical design situation, particular participants feel that one set of these considerations holds primacy over the others. Early participants in the Curriculum Project Movement of the 1960's valued knowledge considerations more highly than others. As a consequence, curriculum products such as those often associated with the 'New Math' and the 'New Science' were seen to be intellectually rich but instructionally disjointed, learner insensitive and administratively unwieldy.

Many of the so-called innovative language teaching methods are considered innovative not because they employ any new views of language or of language proficiency (knowledge considerations) but rather because they demand dramatically different teaching techniques. Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and Suggestopoedia are all examples of methods which turn almost exclusively around instructional considerations. Similarily, proponents of particular instructional technologies (programmed learning, language laboratories, educational television, computer assisted instruction) have been accused of promoting these on their instructional merits or claims, without adequate reflection on knowledge, learner, and administrative considerations.

It is relevant to note that what has been called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has, in fact, reflected preoccupation with different kinds of considerations at various points in its brief history. The changing nature of CLT has, in fact, made definition and description of CLT often difficult to formulate and confusing to follow (eg Yalden, 1983). In its first phase -- the Wilkins Period--CLT concerned itself with attempts to redefine the knowledge base, principally by defining language organisation in terms of notions and functions rather than in terms of grammatical structures. In the second phase--the Munby Period--CLT focused on determination of learner needs through various mechanisms proposed for needs assessment. In its third phase, the Prabhu Period--CLT was defined by the kind of instructional tech-

niques employed--group work, task accomplishment, meaning negotiation, caring and sharing and the like. Thus, CLT in its short history has focused on knowledge considerations in Phase 1, learner considerations in Phase 2 and instructional considerations in Phase 3.

It is harder to find examples of language teaching designs biased towards administrative considerations, although the Westinghouse Teaching Contract System of the 1970's approximates a design wherein administrative considerations dominated all others. We can anticipate new administrative and organizational initiatives in the nineties. Administrative considerations involve such factors as creating and maintaining continuity of instructional goals and approaches across teachers, classes and grade or proficiency levels. In the past, program designers have attempted to legislate educational continuity by means of syllabus specification, objectives, curriculum design, scope and sequencing delineation, textbook series structuring and/or teacher training. It seems fair to say that all of these have fallen short without some sort of administrative agency given the power and will to enforce continuity in teaching and learning patterns. Demands for stronger administrative control of educational programs, whether exercised through coercion or cajolery, is already emerging on several educational fronts.

In the remainder of this paper I would like to consider several factors which have high probability for shaping language education in the 1990's. I will use the KILA model to organize and clarify these factors although the probability of their influence on language education in nineties is independent of one's faith in or committment to the KILA model.

IV KNOWLEDGE CONSIDERATIONS: FOUR BASES MAKE ONE RUN

In the brief preceding discussion of knowledge considerations in language education, I mentioned two kinds of knowledge which influence language learning programs. One kind of knowledge is linguistic knowledge. What is the theory of language on which the program is built? What are learners expected to know, either explicitly or implicitly, about the language they are learning? Designers of courses in general English concern themselves with these kinds of questions. The second kind of knowledge is subject matter knowledge. For what purposes is the learner learning the language? What is the structure of the subject matter which forms the basis for content selection in the language program? Language for Specific Purpose (LSP) course designers tend to be more interested in these kinds of questions.

These knowledge concerns will persevere in the 1990's and will be explored as method-independent issues. In his message for the 1980's Ewer commented,

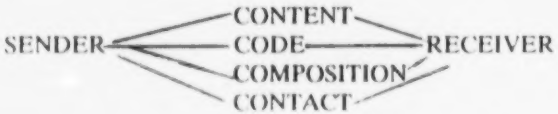
> "Contrary to a surprisingly common misapprehension ESP does not rely for its successful implementation on some new and magic system of classroom methodology ...methods, in fact, are far less important than appropriateness of linguistic content." (Ewer, cited in Robinson, 1980)

The message remains the same for the 1990's.

There will be new and continuing inquiries into the nature of language and into the nature of academic content that will have relevance to language education. My bet is that linguistic inquiries will delve deeper into the nature of language functions, and that subject matter inquiries will delve deeper into the nature of disciplinary and occupational knowledge and their representations. A four square sampler from each of these two kinds of knowledge base inquiries will suggest some of the directions that studies in the 1990's may take.

1. STANDARD SIX TO A FUNCTIONAL FOUR

Models of communication typically look something like the following:



Roman Jakobson provided the insight that emphasis in any individual communicative act tends to fall unequally on these elements. (Jakobson, 1960). That is, if the **sender** is the most important element in the communicative act, the function tends to be an "I"- centered ***emotive*** one. If the **receiver** is the most important element, the function tends to be a "you"- centered, ***persuasive*** one. If the focus is on **content**, then the function is "it" centered - the so-called ***referential function***. If on the language **code**, a ***metalinguistic*** function with focus on language "itself". If on the **composition** (or shape) of the message, a ***poetic*** function. (Pronominally, I have nicknamed this the "thou" function, in that it gives off a faint suggestion of Shakespeare). And if the weight is on the **contact** (or **channel** or **communion**), then the focus is on "us" as a communicative partnership. Jakobson calls this last the "phatic" function. Were I to pare these functions down to a Final Four, it seems the functions most critical to most second language learners are the emotive, persuasive, referential and phatic functions, and it is to the understanding of these functions and their realizations that applied linguistics will increasingly direct itself in the 1990's.

2. QUADRIVEL

Subject matter has its own well-established Fourmats. Medieval schooling was built around study of the Quadrivium - arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music, much as the contemporary school curriculum has as its principle subject matter language, mathematics, science and social studies. Studies of academic faculty personalities have identified four personality types distinctively associated with the arts, the humanities, the sciences and the technologies. (Gaff and Wilson, 1970). In the 1990's we can anticipate further attempts to characterize the nature of disciplines and occupations and the language use and users associated with these. These studies will be of considerable interest to those involved in LSP and its related studies.

V INSTRUCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: TYPE AND TRIPE

I want to consider briefly three sub-topics within the broad area of instructional concerns. These are method commonalities, teaching styles and media.

1. COMMON LAW METHOD MARRIAGES

Methods tend to be guruesque. Method spokespersons stress the uniqueness of their method as well as, intentionally or unintentionally, their own idiosyncracy. Methods are typically described as novel in their nature and immaculate in their conception. Major descriptive sources for methods often come from vanity presses with names like Sky Oaks Productions. Consequently, talk centers on how methods are particular rather than on how they are similar. I anticipate that in the near future and before the methodological Big Band era is over, some attempts will be made to synthesize some of the major method claims and characteristics. I have made a modest attempt to do this myself. I have listed a number of factors which are held to facilitate language acquisition and have divided these into two sub-categories depending on whether the factors appear to be under the control of language teachers or whether the factors operate independent of classroom planning and organization. (Rodgers, 1986). The mnemonic device for remembering these factor items is that they all begin with the letter "B". Without going into these in detail, let me share with you a few items from each of the two lists with brief definitions of the Big B's. List One contains items which are held to positively influence language learning but which are **not** under the control of the language teacher.

LIST ONE

Birth - Native intelligence and aptitude

Bloom - The optimal age for language learning

Background - Ambience supportive of language learning in the home and community

Bath - Residential immersion in a new language situation.

List Two contains items that **do** appear to be under the control of language educators. (Initials code LT methodologies which assume to manipulate this factor in their methodological practices. AL = Audio-Lingualism; SLT = Situational Language Teaching; CLT = Communicative Language Teaching; SW = The Silent Way; TPR = Total Physical Response; CLL = Community Language Teaching; NA = The Natural Approach; S = Suggestopedia.)

LIST TWO

Brains - Requires use of problem-solving, thinking capacities in connection with LT (SLT, CLT, SW, NA)

Breezy - Conducts LT in a minimum stress, informal, low affective filter environment (SW, TPR, CLL, NA, S)

Buddies - Encourages language learning undertaken with practice and support partners (CLT, CLL)

Bugle - Provides attention calls and surprises to help keep learners alert and focused (TPR, NA).

The above is obviously crude and approximate. However, it does suggest how one might begin to look for and define similarities in method practices and philosophies.

2. STYLES OF TEACHERS AND LEARNERS: TELL US WE'RE TOO JUNG?

Interest in teaching and learning styles has burgeoned in recent years and will continue to swell in the 1990's. It is difficult to consider either teaching styles or learning styles independently since models for both derive from the same psychological parent. As well, learning and teaching style inventories are typically thought of and used in conjunction with one another. Therefore, I will here combine the discussion on Teaching Styles, which belongs in this section, with some discussion on Learning Styles, which rightly belongs in the next section on Learner Considerations.

Critical questions in the domain of learning/teaching styles are:

1. Have useful models of and accompanying instrumentation for individual learning/teaching styles been developed? If not, can they be?
2. Can match-making schemes be devised that will match learners and teachers to educational programs appropriate to their particular learning and teaching characteristics?
3. Can systems incorporating such match-making schemes be resourced and used in real time/real paradigm situations?
4. Should learners and teachers be encouraged to add new style variations to their current styles? Should learners and teachers be encouraged to abandon unsuccessful though preferred learning and teaching styles?
5. Should the entire system of style inventorying, classifying and prescribing be "open" to learners and teachers or should diagnosis and prescription based on style inventorying be restricted to expert analysts?

The history of style analysis probably dates from Carl Jung's early work on personality types. (Jung, 1923). Jung hypothesized two major modes of perception and two major modes of evaluation, the permutations of which yield four major personality types. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is also fours-fed and defines "The Four Temperaments". A major contemporary figure in learning styles research is David Kolb whose Learning Style Inventory (LSI), not surprisingly, defines four adoptive learning preferences. He labels these learning style preferences

1. Concrete Experience
2. Reflective Observation
3. Abstract Conceptualization
4. Active Experimentation.

A sample item from the Kolb LSI will suggest how these are assessed.

When I learn
- *I like to deal with my feelings*
- *I like to watch and learn*
- *I like to think about ideas*
- *I like to be doing things.*

All of these are precursors to the development of the McCarthy Teaching Style Inventory (TSI) which, needless to say is called the 4Mat system. (McCarthy, 1987). The four teaching style preferences McCarthy posits are

1. Discussion Method
2. Information Method

3. Coaching Method
4. Self-Discovery Method.

A sample question from the TSI will suggest how these "Methods" are realized in reported teaching preferences.

The role of the teacher is primarily, to be:
- *An information provider and a skills trainer*
- *An informed, concerned champion of the public interest*
- *A caring facilitator*
- *A scholarly person.*

The 4MAT system is increasingly used in the United States in pre-service teacher education programs and in in-service teacher workshops. Like the left brain/right brain construct, the 4MAT teacher style categorization is becoming a belief system and a belief system that is likely to gain many more disciples in the 1990's.

At a recent national conference Thomas DeBello compared the variables, appropriate populations, validity of instrumentation and research behind eleven major learning style models. The number of learning style models is growing daily. Alas, so are the number of stylistic types. Five-style models are not uncommon (Dunn and Dunn, 1984), and at least one model reports learning style types approaching double figures (Keefe, 1986). However, I think it is safe to hold to a four part model for the 1990's, and I further think that the Kolb and McCarthy models, described above, are likely to gain and maintain popularity.

It is interesting to note in passing that the most useful source of information about and analysis of learning styles has been written by a teacher of English as a second language. This is Ken Willing's *Learning Styles in Adult Migrant Education* (1985) and its accompanying practical guide, *Helping Adults Develop their Learning Strategies* (1985).

3. MEDIA-TIONS

It seems unlikely if not impossible that one could leave a discussion of instructional considerations for the 1990's without saying something about the anticipated role of media and technology. However, I will come close to making such a unprecedented departure. Why?

Well, for one thing, the potential influence of media on language education has been dealt with at some length by other papers in this collection, and I feel that other factors need at least equal time.

Also my major concerns are with school education, rather than with home

learning, tertiary education, vocational and technical education and so forth. If one looks at the impact of technology on school education over the past fifty years, one is impressed by the rhetoric but disappointed by the results. There is little to suggest that this impact will change much in the 1990's.

Let me use as example my own experience in Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) - now acronymized CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) - on our own field.

I became involved in applied linguistics by assignment. In 1959, I was an electrical engineer working for the Radio Corporation of America. I was assigned by RCA to explore the possibility of translating languages and teaching languages using a computer. I spent several years at RCA and at Georgetown University working on hardware and software designs to achieve these purposes -- with conspicuously modest success. I have returned to these early challenges several times since 1959, with similarly modest success. In looking at my own involvement in these inquiries, I count (you may be surprised at the number) four historical generations of attempts to institutionalize the teaching of second languages by computer. These four generations might be labelled and dated somewhat as follows: (Dates are approximate and perhaps intentionally contentious)

1. The Teletypewriter Era (1960-1965)
2. The CRT Touchscreen Era (1965-1970)
3. The Plato Era (1970-1980)
4. The Computer-Video (TICCIT/Atari) Era (1978-1982).

All of these have somewhat similar histories in the schools - enthusiastic promotion by developers and marketers, brief periods of visibility and limited use in manufacturer and/or federally supported schools, fading interest (and funding), obsolescence, warehousing and disposal.

We are now engaged in a fifth generation of computer-assisted language learning - the CALL era - founded on the micro-processor. (This fifth generation is not to be confused with the so-called Fifth Generation of "expert" computer systems or the singing group of the same name). Great hopes are held for this latest generation of computer assisted instruction as there were great hopes held for its predecessors. The record does not support undue optimism.

An advocate of computer-assisted instruction promises that "As computer systems become smaller and cheaper, they will more and more come to be accepted as classroom tools, much the way other classroom technology like cassette tape recorders, motion picture projectors and television are being used and accepted." (Campbell, 1980). Coming from one who earns a living as a designer of computer-based instructional systems, this sounds like a humble claim indeed. I think it's fair to say that, at least in my own country, the impact

of plug-in technology on school education has been modest to minute. If CALL aspires to an impact on language teaching equivalent to that of film, it may well achieve it. This seems to be a minor role, indeed.

Plug-ins will have a growing impact on language teaching in higher education and in industrial and domestic settings. As for schools, I suggest that teachers in the 1990's had best hang on to their chalk and erasers lest the dreams of media magic in their schools just go up in smoke.

VI LEARNER CONSIDERATIONS

I have already explored above one very important and influential area of inquiry into learner considerations - that of learner styles. I anticipate that increasing interest in learning styles in the 1990's will be paralleled by increasing interest in the determination of successful learning strategies. Earlier work on strategies based on interviews with "Good Language Learners" (eg Rubin, 1975) has been followed recently by more experimentally based strategy training studies (eg O'Malley et al, 1985). A useful survey of current research in second language learning strategies and some suggestions as to where such inquiries may next turn is found in Oxford (1987).

1. A CULTURALLY COMPATIBLE CLASSROOM?

An equally intriguing and considerably more controversial inquiry within the domain of learner considerations involves the role of cultural variables in learning preference and success. The strong claim here is that each culture has its own preferred learning styles, modes and grouping.

The case for culturally based learning styles is summarized in the abstract of a recent review of this issue by Roland Tharp.

> Some psychocultural teaching and learning processes - developed in the culture of the home and community - are deeply implicated in the teaching and learning of the literate and cognitive capacities that are central to the purposes of schooling. There are sharp differences in school achievement by members of different cultures: accounting for the psychocultural contributions to this social problem has been the task of several theories and a growing body of research and educational development. At least four classes of variables - social organization, sociolinguistics, cognition, and motivation - vary by culture in ways that are differentially compatible with the expectations and routines of schools. The evidence for the effectiveness of culturally compatible education is reviewed and found to be gener-

ally positive. Cultural compatibility produces somewhat different classrooms for different cultures. (Tharp, 1989)

It would be too time-consuming to review the evidence for and against culturally-based learning uniqueness. An example from each of Tharp's four classes of variables will suggest the perspective of the whole.

2. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Classroom arrangement, ambiance and study groups are primarily at focus here. Tharp notes that Hawaiian children (in this case defined as children who have 25% or more Hawaiian blood) work most effectively on school tasks in groups of four-five students of mixed sex. Among Navaho children of the same age, on-task effectiveness is observed to be greatest when groups of two-three students of same sex worked together on the same task. Tharp reviews organizational patterns promoting maximum on-task behaviour for black and Canadian Indian children as well.

3. SOCIOLINGUISTICS

There are enormous differences in the conventions of conversation across cultures and particularly children's expected performance in conversation. Often these conventions are at odds with the verbal behaviour expectations of the schools who serve children coming from these diverse cultural groups. For example, Wait-Time in teacher questioning appears to be a critically culture-sensitive classroom variable. "Pueblo Indian children in experimental science classes participated spontaneously twice as frequently in longer wait-time classes than in shorter wait-time classes...On the other hand, Native Hawaiian students have a preference for negative wait-time, a pattern that produces overlapping speech...This is often interpreted by other-culture teachers as rude interruption, though in Hawaiian society it demonstrates involvement and relationship." (Tharp, 1989). Other analysts have stated that where the classroom rhythm of emphasis (beat), rate (density), and silence are similar to the rhythms of home and community conversation, classrooms are most harmonious and learning greatest (noted in Tharp, 1989).

4. COGNITION

Schools generally expect and reward evidence of verbal/analytic thought rather than visual/wholistic thought. "Minority cultures whose members have cognitive functioning congruent with that expected by the school (verbal/analytic) may be expected to succeed in school, and that is the apparent pattern for the Japanese and Chinese." (Tharp, 1989). Where minority cultures exhibit cognitive functioning incongruent with that expected by the school, learning problems arise. "Native Americans consistently score higher in performance than in verbal abilities and higher in spatial than in sequencing skills...(but)...School instruction depends more heavily on verbal and sequencing skills..." (Tharp, 1989). Some thought has been given, particularly during the 1960's, as to how schools might accommodate and encourage these other kinds of cognitive functions, and we can anticipate some return to this kind of experimental schooling design in the 1990's.

5. MOTIVATION

Researchers have examined motivation from the perspective of "Trait" and "State". "Traits" are held to be relatively consistent and persistent and are supported by cultural and community reinforcement. Immigrant Hmong, Vietnamese, and Korean groups have enjoyed remarkable school success because the members of these cultures maintain "strong beliefs in education, high expectations for school performance, and constant admonitions to study." (Tharp, 1989). It is notable that many immigrant groups do succeed in American schools, although immigrant status is obviously not a guarantee of school success. "State" motivation refers to the incentive variables existing in the school and classroom and that are manipulable by teachers and administrators. A variety of such incentives are available, and many have been shown to be differentially attractive to students of different cultural backgrounds. These incentives may involve rewards, punishments, and attention or inattention from the teacher. For example, removing children from social interaction at recess is sharp punishment for Hawaiian children but is of little consequence to Navajo children who appear to be quite happy being on their own. (Tharp, 1989).

This ends the short tour though some of the current action in personality-unique and culture-unique learning styles and preferences. I should note that this kind of analysis and reporting always skirts the edge of ethnic and/or cultural stereotyping. Much of the internal argument in this area is rife with accusations of ethnic stereotyping by researchers one to another. Nevertheless, those who look to classroom reform in the 1990's and can stand the heat of ethnic controversy, are likely to find their philosophy and funding under the head of

Culturally Compatible Classrooms.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS: PRINCIPALLED AND UNPRINCIPALLED POWER

What shall be studied? Who shall be allowed to study? When and where will study take place? How shall instruction be organized and delivered? What rationale is offered for these particular studies for these particular students in this particular form at these particular hours and locations?

Those who determine the answers to these questions are those who are at the locus of administrative authority in the domains for which they determine answers. Administrative responsibility in the senses above suggested has typically been lodged in one of four "authorities". We designate these authorities as

The State
The School
The Teacher
The Learner

It is interesting to note that the locus of power in educational decision-making is constantly in flux, perhaps, never more so than at the moment. In a paper published in 1987, I proposed a graphic hazard illustrating the directions towards centralization or decentralization that educational policy-making in various parts of the world appeared to be taking. Already several of these arrows have to be turned around and headed in reverse directions. Since the graph was drawn, a national educational position paper in Japan has urged unstructuring of the highly centralized Japanese educational system. New Zealand has proposed abandoning its national Department of Education altogether. Australia was making sounds about a National Curriculum until people realized that these appeared to some to be echoes of a Margaret Thatcher proposal. The United Kingdom is being pushed by the present government to adopt something like a national set of curriculum standards. The United States educational picture is in even more complete disarray than usual with no leadership coming from the Bush administration or from any place else. Even little Hawaii, the only centralized school system in the United States, has recently opted for School-Based Management. Just now, the citizens of Hawaii are anxiously awaiting the budgetary decisions of our State Legislature as to when, how and if this will happen.

7. STATE-BASED EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY

Highly centralized or State-based educational decision-making has been a feature of most educational systems at one time or another. The European colonial powers left behind a legacy of nationally centralized educational systems which, in many cases, have survived national independence and the abandonment of such systems in the imperial homeland. The United States had a decade-long romance with large-scale national curriculum initiatives which gave us the New Math, the New Science and the New English. I am Associate Director of the last vestigal large-scale U.S. curriculum development agency. And while I would argue that our very survival indicates that we do some useful work for somebody, no new such agencies have been created in twenty years. The recently retired Secretary of Education and now the Anti-Drug Czar of the U.S., William Bennett, did outline and argue the case for a national curriculum plan for the U.S. But this plan has been abandoned if not forgotten since Bill Bennett has moved from education to drugs.

8. SCHOOL-BASED EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY

Many educational commentators have held that the school principal is the most potentially powerful educational change-agent. The principal, like the mayor of a medium-sized city, has the capacity through example, leadership, personal magnetism (or lack of these) to set the tone and ultimately, determine the success of the school. High enough to see the big picture and available enough to exert personal influence on staff and students as an individual, the principal can "turn a school around" and by doing so can show "how it can be done" and challenge other principals to turn around their schools. Unfortunately, few school principals have the preparation, time or will to reshape the educational program of their schools, and so energies go into plant beautification and increasing student self esteem. These are not unworthy goals, but they are not going to help restructure language learning or any other area of education.

9. TEACHER-BASED EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY

Other commentators, particularly those reflecting on the American scene, see classroom teachers as the ultimate arbiters of what gets taught and how it gets taught. Having no national examinations to prepare students for, with no school inspectors to account to, with little curriculum constraint other than that of their textbook choices, trained to believe that the classroom is a castle from which teachers are entitled, perhaps obligated, to repel all invaders, American

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classroom teachers have great freedom to teach what they want to teach, how they want to teach it. However, I know very few teachers who appreciate or even acknowledge this license to educate. Teachers often feel buried in paper work, overtaxed by extra-curricular responsibilities, consumed by classroom management problems, discouraged by community unwillingness to appreciate their small successes and exhausted by the stresses of commuting, homemaking and often additional employment. Among the banners that teacher unions, professional groups and lobbyists wave in public places, I have never seen one that says,"TEACHERS AS CHANGE AGENTS, NOW!"

10. LEARNER-BASED EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY

There are few learner-run schools. Summerhill and its analogues offered models of schools in which student councils were elevated to judicial but never policy-making bodies. The correspondence schools are still flourishing and finding new functional ways to serve lone-learners through telecommunicational and computer interfaces. Still, someone else sets the texts and standards.

The most long-term and well-known approach to offering language instruction on an as-requested basis is that put together by the Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pedagogiques en Langues (CRAPEL) in Nancy. The organizers take as an underlying assumption that 'an educated person is one who can identify his own needs, set his own goals, develop strategies for meeting his needs, and be able to monitor his own actions in this process." (Stanchina, 1976)

Given the general disarray in the other centers of power, I anticipate that "Autonomous" language learning may finally come into its own in the 1990's. That does not mean that I foresee millions of language learners plugged into their car Audio-Phone tapes or hunched in front of their Macintosh 200ZX's or chortling along with the Moving Mouth on their Videophone. My personal forecast is that computers will be used as dating devices to help people get together who would like to form Language Learning Partnerships. Language is social in use and requires sociability in learning. If learners abandon language teaching classrooms, as well they may, it will be in favour of other social settings in which language learning is more interesting, more intense, and more intimate.

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